

Testimony of Walter Glomb on Raised Senate Bill No. 364
AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
REVISIONS TO THE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING INITIATIVE STATUTE.

Good morning Senator Bartolomeo, Representative Butler and members of the Housing Committee. My name is Walter Glomb. I am a resident of Rockville. I have three sons. My youngest, Nick, who is now 25 years old, lives with Down Syndrome. Nick receives Supported Employment services from the Connecticut Department of Developmental Services under a Medicaid waiver.

I am here today on behalf of my son and others who live with intellectual disabilities to speak IN FAVOR of Raised Senate Bill No. 364 CONCERNING THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING'S RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REVISIONS TO THE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING INITIATIVE STATUTE.

As a parent of a child who lives with an intellectual disability, I have been active in a number of advocacy organizations. I served on the board of directors of the Connecticut Down Syndrome Congress where I was the president for four years. I am presently a leader of the Family Empowerment Task Force, a statewide organization of parents. I have also served on committees and advisory councils for the Department of Developmental Services, the Department of Rehabilitation Services and the Department of Education. Through these activities I have direct personal experience with hundreds of families of individuals who live with intellectual disabilities - and insight to our state services.

Adults who live with intellectual disabilities have special needs and are at risk of homelessness when their parents or other family member are no longer able to care for them. Adults who live with intellectual disabilities are generally unemployed or underemployed and have limited means to pay for housing. According to the Department of Developmental Services, there are now more than 3,500 individuals with intellectual disabilities in need of housing. This population needs more supported housing options than the limited residential services currently offered by DDS.

Currently, my son Nick lives with me and we have just begun to explore ways to have Nick live in his own apartment with appropriate supports. He certainly does not require the full-time, custodial care of a group home. He just needs some help managing his affairs. For the past year I have been meeting with groups of parents who are creating new sustainable housing solutions for their adult children with intellectual disabilities. At meetings in Groton, Meriden, Norwalk, Danbury, Bristol, Willimantic and Hartford more than a hundred parents have contributed their ideas, their concerns and their inspirational housing solutions. Through this process, a picture is beginning to emerge. It is a varied landscape of highly individualized solutions.

It is clear that we have come a very long way from the one-size-fits-all institutional solutions of the past. Generally, people are living in their own homes. These homes may be private residences or rented apartments. Some with live with 24-7 care - others with occasional supports. Where more than one individual shares the residence, there are generally less than five individuals in the home. Some use staff that are managed by an agency and many hire their own staff.

Extending eligibility for supportive housing initiatives to adults with intellectual disabilities will give families one more tool to insure that their loved ones will have a secure permanent home.

Thank you for your attention.